

Legislative Testimony
Joint Committee on Appropriations
Governor's Proposed FY 2017-2018 Budget

I am Dr. Peter N. Herbert, a Board Certified Specialist in Internal Medicine at Yale University and Yale-New Haven Hospital. I served as Chief of Staff, Chief Medical Officer at Yale-New Haven Hospital from 1999 to 2014. I have been very familiar with the work of the Health Assistance interVention Education Network for Connecticut Health Professionals since HAVEN was created by passage of CGS Section 19A-12A in 2007.

It is hard to understate the importance of HAVEN to the management of impaired health professionals in the State of Connecticut. We historically lacked a structured way to deal with impaired professionals that would guarantee their rehabilitation, while simultaneously ensuring their safe return to practice in Connecticut. My office oversaw the credentialing of physicians in training, supervisory physicians, and NPs/PAs at Yale-New Haven Hospital. We knew that physicians and mid-level practitioners suffered physical illness, mental illness, and substance abuse disorders at least at the same rate as the general population. This indicated that 10-15% of the physicians and mid-level practitioners on our staff potentially required supervised treatment and follow-up evaluation before returning to the active practice of medicine. Not surprisingly, this often involved physicians in training, as well as practicing professionals. Referral of impaired professionals to subspecialty programs and physicians was our historical

approach to dealing with problem clinicians. However, we lacked any systematic way to document that rehabilitation was successful and to guarantee over follow-up that recidivism did not occur.

HAVEN, which has sister organizations in most states, revolutionized our approach to impaired professionals. HAVEN has saved the careers of innumerable physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners, and most importantly permitted their re-entry into professional practice with assurance to society that their impairment had been effectively treated and scrupulously monitored over time.

I accepted an invitation to join the Board of HAVEN in 2015 and was most surprised to discover how much HAVEN accomplished with so little resources. HAVEN had inadequate physical facilities and too few staff to manage a client base of several hundred health professionals. Our Board has concluded that HAVEN cannot continue to serve without predictable support from the State of Connecticut.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'P. Herbert', is positioned above the printed name.

Peter N. Herbert, M.D.
Yale-New Haven Hospital